ing demands for coal in the years to come. Various measures being adopted to increase production and improve productivity in coal companies include investment in new mines, fuller utilisation of mining capacity already created, more efficient use and better maintenance of equipment, stricter control of inventory and economy in the use of stores, better use of man power by controlling absenteeism and enforcing discipline and indentification of surplus workers and their re-deployment after suitable training, better availability of scarce inupts like explosives, timber etc., reduction of pit-head stocks by faster movement and more systematic distribution, expeditious and timely completion of new projects and improvement in the law and order situation and control over mafia activities in Bihar-Bengal coalfields.

In so far as price and cost of production of power is concerned, information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Loss due to fire in Durgapur Thermal Power Station

1468. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a fire broke out in the Durgapur Thermal Power Station of the DVC on the 23rd October, 1985;

(b) if so, what is the estimated loss as a result of this fire; and

(c) whether Government propose to set up a Committee to inquire into the causes of this fire and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER (SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A Committee under the Chairmanship of Member (Thermal) Central Electricity Authority, has been constituted by the D.V.C. to enquire into various aspects of the incident. The terms of reference of the Committee are as follows:—

(1) to identify the causes of fire;

(2) to examine the adequacy or otherwise of the measures taken to control the fire;

(3) to examine the adequacy and operational efficiency of otherwise of the fire-fighting system in the DVC;

(4) to identify responsibility for operation lapses, if any, in respect of the above terms of reference;

(5) to make recommendations for bringing back the damaged units into operation;

(6) to suggest remedial measures to prevent such an occurrence in future; and

(7) to make such other recommendation or recommendations which, in its view, is or are pertinent.

Shortfall in oil production

1469. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a shortfall in Oil production in the north-eastern region during the first half of 1985-86;

(b) if so, whether Government have directed the Oil and Natural Gas Commission to take special measures to increase the production so as to make up for the shortfall;

(c) if so, what is the total shortfall of oil production during the above period and the main reasons therefor; and

(d) the action proposed to be taken to fill up the shortfall?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA): (a) to (d) As against the annual target of 5.53 million tonnes for the North Eastern region, the actual production of crude oil during the first half of 1985-86 has been 2.5 million tonnes. ONGC and Oil India Ltd. have been advised to take steps to make up the shortfall in production. The shortfall has been mainly due to delay in receipt of rigs,

compressors and water injection pumps, floods in Eastern region during June 1985, etc.

Some of the steps being taken to make up the shortfall are:

(i) Increased development drilling.

(ii) Acceleration of workover operations.

(iii) Putting more wells on gas lift by installation of additional pumps and compressors.

(iv) Increase pressure maintenance by water injection and gas injection.

Power shortage in the country

1470. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that he has suggested a two-pronged strategy to overcome power shortages in the country;

(b) whether the two main basic needs were the timely implemnetation of the power projects and adequate steps to improve capacity utilisation of the existing capacities;

(c) if so, whether great stress is being laid on these two suggesions;

(d) what steps are being taken to implement these suggestions; and

(e) whether these suggestions after implementation have proved any success?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER (SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir.

(d) In order to improve performance of thermal power stations, a number of measures are being taken on a continuous basis. The measures include:—

(i) Assistance to State Electricity Boards/power stations for undertaking plant betterment programmes.

(ii) Assisting State Electricity Boards/power stations in procurement of requisite quality and quantity of coal and also spare parts from indigenous and foreign sources.

(iii) Visit of task forces and roving teams to identify weak areas requiring improvement and preparation of time bound programmes for rectification.

(iv) Training of engineers and operation and maintenance personnel.

(v) Implemetation of a Centrally sponsored renovation and modernisation scheme for thermal stations, with Central loan.

To expedite the commissioning of new generating capacity, States|SEBs have been advised to strengthen their project management organisations, employ modern monitoring techniques, intensify inspections, and ensure the timely availability of various inputs. Extensive monitoring is also being done by CEA and Department of Power. Senior Officers visit various projects for assisting in the identification and overcoming of constraints. Meetings are held with the equipment suppliers for expediting the delivery of the equipment etc.

(e) Yes, Sir. The plant load factor of thermal stations improved from 44.3 per cent in 1979-80 to 50.1 per cent in 1984-85. The additional capacity commissioned during 1983-84 was about 98 per cent of the target and during 1984-85 it was about 91 per cent of the target.

Pay packets paid to employees/officers in Public Sector Undertakings

1471. SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the minimum and maximum of pay packets paid to employees/officers in public sector undertakings in the country; and

(b) whether there is any proposal before the Government to reduce the existing disparities between the maximum and minimum earnings of the persons employed in public sector undertakings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) Pay packets, besides basic